#### MAYOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS

## CENTER CITY STRATEGY SHAPING DOWNTOWN: PROPOSED CHANGES TO DOWNTOWN ZONING May 20, 2005

#### Introduction

Public policies and regulations promote multiple objectives for Downtown Seattle and govern the patterns of land use and development in complex ways. The City's policies promote both employment and residential objectives in Downtown, with priorities that include a dense office core, an active retail core, areas with mixed uses and some areas, such as Belltown, that are primarily oriented to residential development. Zoned height and density limits set a "building envelope" within which future development can occur. City policies support transitions that step down the zoning in intensity from the most intensive office core areas to the less-intensive peripheral areas of Downtown adjoining adjacent center city neighborhoods such as South Lake Union, Capitol Hill and Uptown.

The regulatory environment is further layered by bonus provisions that require specific levels of performance in addressing development impacts (such as the effects of new development on the need for affordable housing and social services) in order to reach the highest levels of permissible heights and densities. The ability to transfer development rights (TDR) is another feature of Downtown zoning that affords some flexibility in obtaining development rights from other properties, often to promote public objectives such as historic preservation. Given the multiple objectives that pertain to commercial/employment growth and residential growth Downtown (along with various urban design and functional objectives), changes in zoning must be carefully conceived to maintain a rational system that does not create unintended consequences. Regulations that would unduly restrict Downtown development or make it economically unfeasible are not the intent of City policy. City analysis has confirmed that there is considerable potential or capacity for accommodating future growth Downtown. The Mayor's proposed changes will help shape that growth in ways that will create better environments, stimulate the housing market, and provide new public amenities, whether new development is oriented to commercial uses, residential uses or both.

The proposal to change zoned height and density limits Downtown emerged from neighborhood plans for the Denny Triangle and Commercial Core neighborhoods, as well as the overall urban center plan prepared by the Downtown Urban Center Planning Group (DUCPG). These plans contain visions, goals, policies and action recommendations to achieve a vision for future growth in Seattle's Downtown Urban Center. All of the plans include objectives to promote vibrant, diverse mixed-use neighborhoods containing housing for households of all income ranges, as well as objectives for new open space, exceptional urban design character, transportation improvement, among others. Zoning and land use regulations were recommended to be amended in order to promote neighborhood plan objectives. The Commercial Core, Denny

Triangle and DUCPG plans all included proposals for increasing the development capacity of Downtown, to accommodate further employment and residential growth, stimulate residential development and provide resources for affordable housing. To implement these proposals, major revisions to Downtown zoning was recommended, including substantial revisions to the downtown floor area bonus and transfer of development rights (TDR) programs to reprioritize their focus on achieving housing goals. In the Commercial Core Plan, height and density increases were proposed to capture opportunities for increasing development density, particularly housing, and to promote less bulky development, while achieving other urban design objectives. The Denny Triangle Plan included recommendations for permanent height and density increases for all zones in that neighborhood.

With the City Council's approval of Downtown neighborhood plans in early 1999, proposals for rezones in the Commercial Core and Pioneer Square neighborhoods were implemented, along with limited amendments to bonus and TDR provisions. These changes included:

- expanding the use of TDR to allow mixed-income structures including low- and low-moderate income housing to qualify as TDR sending sites;
- removing some density restrictions on residential use in the DOC 1 zone;
- rezoning portions of Pioneer Square and the northwest corner of the retail core to promote mixed use development; and
- amending the Pioneer Square Preservation District provisions to better promote neighborhood development objectives.

In November of 1999, in collaboration with King County and the Denny Triangle, the City enacted the Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) program, which allowed additional height for residential and mixed-use development in zones within the Denny Triangle in order to preserve rural lands and generate resources for public amenities in the neighborhood. The TDC program allowed up to a 30 percent increase above mapped height limits for residential and mixed-use projects that purchase conservation credits from rural properties in King County and contribute to an amenity credit fund for open space and Green Street improvements consistent with the Denny Triangle Neighborhood Plan. The program also established a partnership with King County for ongoing public investment in amenities in the area, in conjunction with the purchase of development credits by private developers.

Also as part of the TDC legislation, an area of approximately four acres was also upzoned from DMC 240 to DOC 2 300 to increase employment capacity in the neighborhood. More recently, the City amended the provisions of the Downtown bonus and TDR programs through legislation adopted in mid-2001. Conditional height increases ranging from 10% to 30% were also adopted under this legislation for DOC 1, DOC 2 and portions of DRC zones. The bonus and TDR programs specify how projects can gain approval for greater density by providing for affordable housing, public open space, landmark preservation, human services and other public amenities.

The final step in the process of implementing neighborhood plan recommendations for downtown has culminated in the publication of the Mayor's recommendations for increases to

the achievable floor area ratios (FAR) which govern the allowable amount of floor area a building may have in relation to its site size, and to the height limits of new structures.

This report describes, in detail, the proposed amendments to Seattle's Land Use Code that are intended to implement the Mayor's proposal for Downtown. The amendments are outlined the sequence in which they appear in the ordinance. In some instances, analysis from the Draft and Final Environmental Impact statements is referenced to provide additional background or support materials on these topics.

## Proposed reordering of Subchapter I: General Standards, Section 23.49

The proposed reordering of standards in this chapter will result in regulations that are easier to use and understand (see table).

The proposed order follows the principles of:

- grouping sections logically
- consolidating similar types of regulations into fewer sections
- placing more important regulations earlier in the chapter
- placing minor details or special-case regulations later in the chapter
- minimizing the re-numbering of sections.

#### Examples of the changes include:

- Moving street-level use requirements and residential use requirements to a place earlier in the chapter.
- Consolidating parking-related regulations into one section
- Consolidating open space-related regulations into one section
- Consolidating odor, noise, light/glare and solid waste/recyclable materials storage into one section

#### Summary of proposed reordering of Subchapter I

Current	New	
23.49.006	.006	Scope of general standards.
23.49.008	.008	Structure height.
23.49.025	.009	Street-level use requirements
23.49.026	.010	General requirements for residential use
23.49.011	.011	Floor area ratio.
23.49.012	.012	Bonus floor area for voluntary agreements for housing and child care.
23.49.013	.013	Bonus floor area for amenity features.
23.49.014	.014	Transfer of development rights (TDR).
NEW	.015	Bonus residential floor area for voluntary agreements for affordable
		housing
23.49.009	.016	Open space and Open Space TDR
<del>23.49.027</del>	To .016	Open space TDR site eligibility
23.49.039	To .016	Special exception for open-space TDR sites
23.49.016	.019	Parking quantity, access and screening/landscaping requirements.

To .019	Standards for location of access to parking
To .019	Screening and landscaping of surface parking areas.
.021	Transportation concurrency level-of-service standards.
.022	Minimum sidewalk and alley width.
.024	View corridor requirements.
.025	Odor, noise, light/glare, solid waste and recyclable materials storage
	space standards.
To .025	Noise standards
To .025	Lighting and glare.
To .025	Solid waste and recyclable materials storage space.
.032	Additions of gross floor area to lots with existing structures.
.034	Modification of plazas and other features bonused under Title 24, and
	replacement of public benefit features.
To .034	Replacement of public benefit features.
.036	Planned community developments (PCDs).
Deleted	Public parks and planned community developments in Downtown Office
	Core 1.
.038	Lots located in more than one (1) zone.
.016	Special exception for Open Space TDR sites
.040	Termination of discontinued conditional uses.
.041	Combined lot development
	To .019 .021 .022 .024 .025  To .025 To .025 To .025 .032 .034  To .034 .036 Deleted .038 .016 .040

## **Section 3: Design Review**

The existing Design Review program permits departures from Land Use Code development standards if an applicant demonstrates that such departures would result in a development that better meets the intent of the adopted design guidelines. Section 23.41.012 of the Seattle Municipal Code lists all development standards from which a departure may be granted. Several standards pertain to Downtown requirements.

Concurrent with the Mayor's proposal for changes to Downtown zoning, the Mayor has proposed changes elsewhere in the Land Use Code implementing the Neighborhood Business District Strategy. An element of both efforts is to improve the Land Use Code for those who must navigate its contents and understand its requirements. As part of the Neighborhood Business District Strategy proposal, Section 23.41.012 has been proposed to be amended to list those standards that may <u>not</u> be departed from, rather than those that may be subject to departure. In an effort to reflect that proposal and maintain consistency with its intent, the Downtown amendments include only those standards, such as required view corridor setbacks, for which departures will continue to not be allowed. The requirement for open space for office uses, provisions for adding floor area above the base FAR, and the maximum parking limit are proposed to be added to the list of standards that are <u>not</u> subject to design review departure.

# **Section 6: Structure Height**

This section is proposed to be amended to add new height limits of 700 and 600 feet and repeal provisions allowing height increases above existing mapped limits that will no longer be

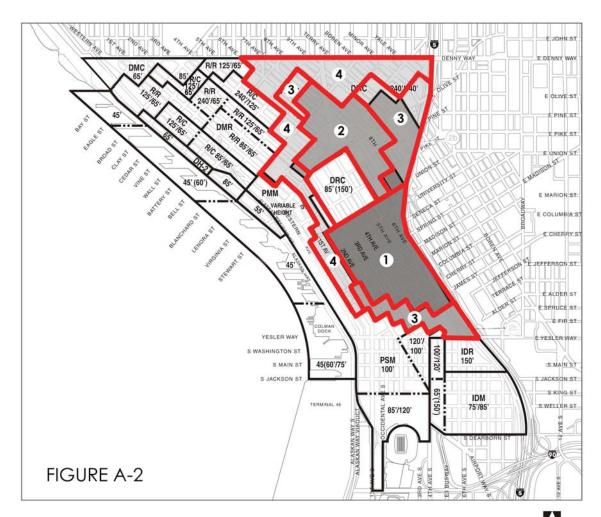
necessary. The height increases are proposed throughout most of the study area, and are analyzed in detail in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, Downtown Height and Density Changes, January, 2005 under the description of the Preferred Alternative in Chapter 2. Graphics illustrating the impacts of development under the proposed changes are included in the Summary, Chapter 4 of the FEIS. A general discussion of the proposals follows.

- Add 700 foot, 600 foot, 400 foot, and 340 foot height districts to the list of maximum structure heights in Downtown zones, and repeal the 300 foot height limit.
- Repeal current allowances for 10%, 20% and 30% height increases for occupied space above maximum height limits in Downtown zones.
- Add allowance for 10% height increase in proposed DMC 400 zones to promote distinctive building tops.
- Include DMC zones among zones with dual height limits for residential and nonresidential uses.
- Add height exception for enclosed common recreation space provided on rooftops.
- Allow a slight increase in additional height allowed for elevator cabs to accommodate technological changes in elevator system design.

Establish 700 foot height district to increase maximum height limit from 450 feet to 700 feet in DOC 1. Under current conditions, the maximum height limit in DOC 1 is 450, with provisions allowing a 20% increase in height to 540 feet, and additional exceptions for rooftop features and screening. With the proposal to increase the maximum FAR in DOC 1 from 14 to 17 (see area labeled "1" in attached graphic), a parallel increase in the height limit is recommended to ensure that even on the largest sites, new projects will be able to accommodate the maximum floor area allowed without requiring larger floor sizes that give highrise structures a bulkier appearance.

Under current Code provisions, the relationship between the height limit and the amount of floor area permitted by the maximum density limit (FAR) has been identified as a factor contributing to the perception that recent high-rise structures are excessively bulky. Current conditions constrain flexibility for massing a structure on a site by often requiring large floor sizes to accommodate permitted density within the height limit, which restricts opportunities for providing more open area at ground level, or designing more slender, tapering towers. For these reason, a 700-foot height limit is proposed that exceeds the 585-foot height limit proposed for DOC 1 in the Commercial Core Neighborhood Plan. The City's analysis, found in the EIS, determined that the proportionally greater increase proposed in neighborhood plans for permitted density relative to the proposed height increase would not resolve the bulk issue. To address the bulk issue, the proposed 700-foot limit will ensure that even for development on a full-block site, floor sizes would not have to exceed 20,000 square feet to accommodate the floor area allowed under the proposed maximum FAR limit.

The proposed height limit would make the current provision allowing a 20% height increase above the maximum height limit unnecessary, and this provision would be repealed. Current provisions for rooftop features and screening would be retained.



# **Preferred Alternative**

#### 1 OFFICE CORE

- increase maximum FAR from 14 to 17
- increase height limit from 450'/540' to 700'

#### 2 OFFICE CORE EXPANSION AREA

- increase maximum FAR from 10 to 14
- increase height from 300'/360' to 600'

#### 3 DMC 340/400

- increase heights to 340' for commercial and 400' for residential and mixed use projects
- increase maximum FAR from 7 to 10 in DMC areas

#### 4 DMC 240/400

- 240' height limit for commercial and 400' for residential and mixed use projects
- maintain existing maximum FAR of 7

Note: Two half-blocks between Pine and Union Sts. on Second Avenue have been included in the study area for this Final EIS.



© 2004 City of Seattle, all rights reserved. No warranties of any sor including accuracy, fitness or merchantabile accompany this product. Establish a 600 foot height district to increase maximum height limit from 300 feet to 600 feet in areas that will continue to be classified as DOC 2; reclassify other DOC 2 areas to DMC with 340/400 foot and 240/400 foot maximum height limits. Under this proposal, the DOC 2 zone will be reduced in area, and will be primarily limited to the Denny Triangle west of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, with a portion between Stewart and Virginia Streets extending into Belltown as far as 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (see area labeled as "2" in the attached graphic). Nearly all other DOC 2 areas will be reclassified DMC 340/400 (the eastern and southern areas labeled as "3" in the attached graphic), with a 10 FAR maximum density limit. However, one half-block west of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue currently in DOC 2 zoning would be reclassified DMC 240/400, with a 7 FAR density limit (small shaded area west of DRC zone in area labeled "4" in attached graphic). The current 240-foot height limit would be retained here for non-residential uses, but would be increased to 400 feet for residential use.

Under current height provisions, heights in the DOC 2 zone in the Denny Triangle can be increased by 30% to 390 feet for residential use through the Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) program<sup>1</sup>. Another current incentive is a 20% increase in height from 300 feet to 360 feet for the DOC 2 area west of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and from 240 feet to 288 feet along the southern edge of the Commercial Core. A 10% increase from 300 feet to 330 feet is allowed for the portion east of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. With the proposed increases in height limits, these provisions for added height would be repealed.

The rationale for increasing heights to 600 feet in the remaining DOC 2 areas (labeled as "2" in attached graphic) is the same as in DOC 1. An additional factor in the DOC 2 area is the potential size of development sites resulting from the larger block sizes (approximately 60,000 square feet in DOC 1 versus 90,000 square feet in DOC 2). Even with a lower maximum FAR of 14 proposed for the area, the amount of floor area allowed on a DOC 2 site could exceed DOC 1. While the larger site size allows for more than one structure on a block, the 600-foot height limit allows additional flexibility to promote massing that is less bulky, compared either to current regulations or to a proposed increase to only 400 feet. With the proposed increase in height in DOC 2 from the current mapped limit of 300 feet to 600 feet, the 300-foot limit would no longer apply in any Downtown zone and would be repealed.

Establish 340 foot height limit for commercial uses. A new DMC zone designation is proposed, DMC 340/400, that would allow a base FAR of 5 and a maximum FAR of 10, with a 340-foot height limit for non-residential uses and a 400-foot height limit for residential use. Currently, 340 feet is not included among the list of Downtown height districts identified in the Code. This new zoned height limit would be applied to some DMC zoned areas in the Denny Triangle that currently have a maximum FAR of 7 and maximum height limit of 240 feet (light-shaded areas in the two northern areas labeled "3" in attached graphic); and to some DOC 2 areas where the maximum FAR is currently 10, and the maximum height limits range from between 240 feet to 300 feet, with provisions to allow further increases to 288 feet and 330 feet for non-residential uses, and up to 390 feet for residential uses in the Denny Triangle.

<sup>1.</sup> The Transfer of Development Credits program, through an interlocal agreement with King County, allows for additional density on properties in the Denny Triangle in exchange for preservation of rural lands and contributions to a fund for community amenities.

The 340 foot height limit is consistent with proposals in the Denny Triangle neighborhood plan for 100-foot increases in height above current limits in that neighborhood. The additional height will also accommodate the increase in maximum FAR from 7 to 10 in some parts of the new zone, as well as the current 10 FAR limit elsewhere, helping to avoid conditions that would make bulkier structures necessary to accommodate permitted FAR.

Establish 400-foot height limit for residential use. The 400-foot height limit is proposed as the height limit for residential use in most DMC zones throughout the study area—the exceptions being the strip along the eastern edge of the Pike Place Market (DMC 125), and the area west of Post Alley along the waterfront (DMC 160), where current height limits would be retained. Most areas proposed to allow 400 foot structures are currently zoned DMC with a 240-foot height limit, with provisions to go as high as 312 feet in the Denny Triangle. There are some DMC areas on the northern edge of the Denny Triangle that currently have height limits of 125 feet and 160 feet, with increases allowed for housing to 162.5 and 208 feet respectively (the northernmost portions of the area labeled "4" in the attached graphic). There is also a DRC area proposed to be rezoned DMC that currently allows up to 195 feet for residential use (two half-blocks shown as un-shaded west of DRC zone, in area labeled "4" in the attached graphic).

In addition to being consistent with neighborhood plans in those areas where height increases were proposed, the 400-foot height limit is intended to accommodate a density of residential development that is currently allowed in the 240-foot height areas, but in a more slender tower form, with additional floor area and height permitted as incentives for contributions to affordable housing and design to green building standards.

Repeal provisions allowing 10% and 20% increases above maximum height limits in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones. These measures were adopted in 2001 to address the issue of the perceived bulk of development under the existing height limits, until there was a final resolution to the issue of appropriate height and density limits following the environmental review of neighborhood plan proposals.

10% Height Increase. A 10% height increase above the mapped height limits in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones is currently allowed for projects that decrease the floor size of upper floors by a specified percentage. In DOC 1, the 450 foot height limit can be increased to 495 feet (approximately 3 to 4 additional floors), DOC 2 300 allows an increase to 330 feet (2 to 3 additional floors), and DOC 2 240 allows an increase to 264 feet (2 additional floors). The added height does not allow additional building density; current maximum FAR limits control commercial density. To restrict additional bulk that could be added from floor area that is exempt from FAR calculations, a separate limit on gross floor area is applied to lots using the extra height. Consequently, market rate housing, which otherwise is exempt from FAR calculations, is included as chargeable FAR. Uses that continue to be exempt from FAR calculations include street level uses, bonused housing and floor area gained through the TDC program.

<u>20% Height Increase.</u> The 20% additional height above mapped limits also applies to the DOC 1 zone, and a smaller portion of the DOC 2 zone, with DOC 2 areas in Belltown and east of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue excluded. To gain the additional 20%, in addition to the reduction in bulk of upper floors, projects must also meet special site conditions intended to offset the impacts of taller

structures on the public street environment. Generally, the increased height may be granted if one or more of the following conditions are met: 1) a designated landmark structure is located on the site and will be retained, 2) a specified percentage of ground level open space is provided on the site, or 3) structures of limited height occupy a specified percentage of the site, or 4) the site includes some combination of low buildings and ground-level open space. The same limits on exempt FAR discussed under the 10% increase also apply.

This provision was used to allow increased height for the Washington Mutual Tower now under construction on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue south of Union Street. However, the original provisions requiring reductions in upper floors and special site conditions were modified through amendments adopted in 2003.

These provisions for allowing additional height are proposed to be repealed because, under the proposed increases to maximum height limits, future development would have the flexibility to provide the reduction in bulk of upper floors and accommodate site conditions that the height incentives were intended to achieve. Increasing height limits as proposed is also more consistent with the neighborhood plan proposals that the additional height should be granted outright.

Repeal provisions for a 30% height increase for the half blocks on the western edge of the **Downtown Retail Core (DRC) zone.** A special incentive for housing was adopted in 2001 for two half-blocks in the DRC zone on the east side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue between Pine and Union Streets, allowing a 30% height increase above the 150 foot height limit (up to 195 feet) under the following conditions:

- All floor area above 85 feet is in residential use:
- The maximum coverage allowed above 85 feet is 70%; and
- The project conforms with specific requirements for upper level setbacks and maximum façade widths.

With the proposed rezone of these two half-blocks to Downtown Mixed Commercial (DMC) 240/400 (shown as un-shaded blocks west of DRC zone, in area labeled "4" in the attached graphic), these provisions would no longer apply in the DRC zone, and therefore would be repealed. Under the new designation, which would be the same zoning that applies on the opposite side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, residential structures and mixed use structures with housing could go as high as 400 feet, provided they conform to proposed bulk controls, use the affordable housing bonus and meet green building standards. While bulk controls would address the dimensions of high-rise towers for residential use above 85 feet in height, there would be no specific requirements for setbacks, and commercial structures (or any structure less than 125 feet) in height would not be subject to these controls. The permitted density for commercial development would also increase from a maximum FAR of 5 under DRC to a maximum 7 FAR under DMC 240/400. The maximum height allowed for commercial structures would increase from 150 feet now allowed under special conditions in the DRC zone to a maximum of 240 feet under the DMC designation.

Additional background and analysis of this recommended rezone is included in Chapter 4, Summary of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Downtown Height and Density Changes (pages 4-22 to 4-26).

Repeal provisions allowing 30% height increase in the Denny Triangle through participation in the TDC program. The proposal to allow the TDC program to expire and raise height limits in the Denny Triangle nullifies these provisions. A more detailed discussion of changes to the TDC program is included under Section 21.

Allow a 10% height increase above the maximum height limit of 400 feet in DMC zones. To encourage more distinctive residential towers in DMC zones, a structure would be allowed to extend up to 40 feet above the maximum height limit to encourage more distinctive building tops. Residential units would not be allowed in portions above the height limit. Additional limits would apply to reinforce a tapering profile, including a limit on the amount of floor area that can be enclosed in this portion of the structure.

Add DMC zones among the zones with higher and lower height limits established for different uses. This section of the Code recognizes zones that have a dual height limit, including the Downtown Mixed Residential (DMR) zone. In these zones, the higher height limit applies to residential use, recognizing the different characteristics of residential structures, enhancing the relationship between commercial and residential projects within an area, and providing a height incentive for residential development in zones where both housing and commercial development are allowed. The proposal includes two DMC zones that would include such dual height limits, the DMC 240/400 and DMC 340/400 zones.

Add covered or enclosed common recreation area among features permitted to extend above the maximum height limits. This provision would allow enclosed space provided to meet the common recreation area requirement for residential use to be included among the features allowed to extend up to 15 feet above the maximum height limit. Up to 50 percent of required common recreation area can be provided as enclosed space. The common recreation requirement is frequently met by providing such features as rooftop gardens on residential structures. With rooftops of high-rise buildings exposed to conditions of wind and weather, permitting enclosed space will make rooftop amenities more usable to building occupants, and allowing the enclosed space to extend above the height limit will increase opportunities for developers to provide it.

#### Section 8: Street level use

Section 23.49.025, Street-level use, is re-codified as Section 23.49.009 and moved to the front of this subchapter so that when Section 23.49.026, General requirements for residential use is recodified as 23.49.010, all general standards related to use will be located in sequential sections.

## **Section 10: General Requirements for Residential Use**

This section addresses the common recreation area requirement for residential use, including standards for the amount and dimensions of recreation space that must be provided for the common use of the residents of a project. The following amendments are proposed in this section related to the common recreation area requirement for residential use.

- Allow TDC provisions to expire. With the Denny Triangle Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) program scheduled to expire at the end of July, 2005, the provisions in this section allowing for a reduction in the amount of common recreation area required for TDC projects would no longer apply and would be repealed.
- Cap amount of required common recreation area. With the proposed changes for increased height, residential structures will increase in floor area. Under the existing requirement, the amount of common recreation area that must be provided in a project is based on a percentage of the total amount of floor area in residential use. With larger structures, this amount can exceed the size of the building lot, making it very difficult to accommodate the space in a usable form. Under the proposed amendment, the requirement for common recreation space would be capped at an amount equivalent to the size of the project site. Furthermore, floor area in residential use gained through the affordable housing bonus would be exempt from the calculation of required common recreation area.
- Reduce minimum dimension for common recreation area at street level. Currently, in
  order to qualify as common recreation area, a space must have a minimum horizontal
  dimension of 15 feet. To encourage more landscaping along the street frontages of
  projects, this minimum dimension is reduced to 10 feet for open space provided as
  landscaped setback area at street level.
- Encourage common recreation area located at base of structures. Other amendments to the common recreation area requirement are proposed to encourage more greenery and architectural interest at the base of residential structures. These include provisions that would allow space provided as publicly accessible open space at street level and space located on street facing facades within 85 feet of the sidewalk elevation to be given double credit in calculations of the amount of common recreation area provided.
- Payment in lieu. Under this amendment, instead of providing a project's required common recreation area on-site, an owner would have the option of making a payment to the City to fund green street improvements or open space acquisition and improvements. Providing this alternative will increase the range and variety of open space resources available to the residents of new downtown developments.
- Green street improvements. This provision, which currently allows the improvement of a green street abutting a project site to meet up to 50 percent of the common recreation area requirement, would be expanded to allow the Director of DPD to waive the requirement that the green street abut the lot so that the improvement could be made to a green street located near the project site.

#### **Section 11: Floor area ratio**

Major amendments to this section include:

**Increases to maximum FAR.** Proposed amendments increase the maximum FAR limits in the DOC 1 zone, portions of the existing DOC 2 zone, and some DMC areas.

• In DOC 1, the current maximum FAR of 14 is proposed to be increased to 17;

- For existing portions of the DOC 2 zone that remain DOC 2 (labeled "2" in the attached graphic), the maximum FAR would increase from 10 to 14. Other DOC 2 areas, generally east of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and along the southern edge of the Commercial Core (the two easternmost areas labeled "3" in the attached graphic), would be reclassified as DMC 340/400, but retain the current 10 FAR maximum.
- Some existing DMC 240 areas in the Denny Triangle (northernmost area labeled "4" in the attached graphic) would be reclassified as DMC 340/400, with an increase in the maximum FAR from 7 to 10; no changes to maximum FAR limits are proposed for other DMC areas.

**Explanation of proposal.** The proposed increases in FAR limits implement recommendations from Downtown neighborhood plans intended to increase opportunities for accommodating jobs and housing growth. However, not all FAR increases recommended in neighborhood plans are included in the proposal. The DOC 2 areas reclassified as DMC 340/400 and existing DMC areas on the periphery of Belltown and the Commercial Core would all retain current FAR limits. This will promote residential use in these areas and maintain a better transition between the intensity of development between the office core and adjacent less intensive zones.

The greatest increases in maximum FAR are proposed in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones where greater concentrations of employment growth are appropriate for the following reasons:

- Compatibility with the existing intensity of development in many parts of DOC 1 and DOC 2, where numerous projects built under earlier zoning regulations exceed the proposed maximum limits.
- Areas proposed for the greatest increases are best served by transit, with significant investments in transit infrastructure and further improvements proposed, including access to light rail tunnel and monorail stations.
- With higher densities permitted, these areas can absorb a larger share of Downtown employment growth, decreasing the pressure for office development in peripheral areas where it is desirable to encourage more housing.
- Accommodating more growth in the city's highest density area will, through bonus provisions, provide for greater mitigation of impacts than in other, lower density areas.

#### Increases above the base FAR

Several provisions are amended that establish how floor area may be gained above the permitted base FAR in various zones, including:

Gaining the first increment of FAR above the base FAR. The proposal would repeal current provisions for gaining the first FAR above the base, replacing it with a new provision that would require use of a high-performance green building incentive to gain the first increment of FAR above the base FAR, which would vary by zone, and extending this provision to the DMC zone, in addition to DOC 1 and DOC 2.

**Explanation of Proposal.** Among previously approved amendments, adopted in 2001, was a provision that provided options for adding floor area for the first FAR above the base in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones. Any floor area provided above that level required that a developer meet the requirement of the City's downtown bonus program that trades higher building density for the provision of public benefit features. Under the 2001 amendments, the base FAR in DOC 1 and DOC 2 was raised by one FAR—from 5 to 6 FAR in DOC 1 and from 4 to 5 FAR in DOC 2. These new limits reflected maximum limits allowed in other Downtown zones and in commercial areas outside Downtown that don't allow further FAR increases through bonuses. One purpose for raising the base FAR was to compensate for the elimination of bonuses that had previously been available for some features that a project might be required to provide, or would opt to provide for its own benefit, such as street level uses, widened sidewalks, or overhead weather protection.

Neighborhood plan proposals called for increasing the base FAR by at least one more FAR beyond the 2001 increase, and eliminating floor area bonuses for a number of amenity features that would either be required without a bonus in a project, or were not considered of sufficient public benefit relative to other, higher priority options, to continue to bonus.

Rather than further increasing the base FAR, the decision was made in 2001 to continue to allow numerous bonus options, including several bonuses proposed to be eliminated, in order to gain the first FAR above the base. This provision was expected to be re-evaluated with proposals for increasing the maximum FAR. As part of the review of proposals for increasing the maximum FAR limits, the Preferred Alternative in the FEIS recommended increasing maximum FARs to levels recommended in neighborhood plans for DOC 1 and DOC 2, but eliminating the provision for the first FAR above the base FAR so that the housing bonus and TDR programs would be used for a portion of all floor area gained above the base FAR. Other bonus features that had remained only for use in the first FAR above the base, including street level retail uses and short term parking, would be repealed.

In response to comments following the release of the FEIS, the decision was made to maintain a provision for an initial increment of FAR above the base, but to replace current options with a new high-performance green building incentive as the only means of adding this floor area, and to extend the provision to the DMC zone so that all major commercial projects Downtown would be subject to similar standards. Under this proposal, the increment of FAR allowed to be gained above the base FAR through the green building incentive is generally in proportion to the total amount of floor area allowed between the base and maximum FARs. In DOC 1, the increment continues to be 1.0 FAR, while it drops to 0.75 in DOC 2. In the DMC zones, which currently do not have a provision for how the first increment of FAR above the base is to be gained, the proposal would set the increment at 0.50 FAR in DMC with maximum FAR of 10 and 0.25 in DMC with maximum FAR of 7.

To qualify for the high-performance green building incentive, a project must achieve a LEED<sup>™</sup> Certified rating. LEED<sup>™</sup> stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, and is the nationally recognized standard for green building developed by the US Green Building Council. Two LEED rating systems will be allowed: LEED for New Construction (LEED–NC) and LEED

for Core & Shell (LEED–CS). <u>LEED–NC</u> was developed for commercial, institutional and high-rise residential projects and applies to owner-occupied projects or projects that are built out by the owner/developer. <u>LEED–CS</u> was developed for speculative commercial projects. <u>LEED–CS</u> applies to buildings where the owner/developer is only responsible for the core and shell of the building, and the tenants are responsible for design and construction of the commercial interiors. The system focuses on the base building elements, such as the structure, envelope and building-level systems. The provisions also allow the Director discretion, as a special exception, to apply equivalent standards when flexibility in the LEED certification standard may be appropriate.

**Increases above the base FAR in DMC zones.** The proposal would repeal current provisions allowing a choice in the types of incentives used to gain floor area above the base FAR, and replace them with provisions similar to those in other zones.

**Explanation of proposal.** The 2001 amendments to the Downtown bonus and TDR programs included a new system for area above the base FAR, but also continued to allow use of the provisions previously in effect. Unlike the DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones, the base FAR for DMC was not increased under the 2001 amendments. Because the new bonus program was seen as more costly to developers than the former system, requiring all FAR above the base to be gained under the new program was viewed as penalizing development in the DMC zone, which, because of the lower maximum FAR, would not achieve development densities that might better absorb these costs. As an interim measure, the decision was made to allow use of either the old or new system, until the provisions could be re-evaluated in light of this current proposal.

In the Preferred Alternative for height and density increases, several related proposals influenced how floor area would be gained in the DMC zone. For some DMC areas in the Denny Triangle, the proposal called for increasing the maximum FAR limit from 7 to 10 FAR, giving the DMC zone the same base and maximum density limits as DOC 2, and therefore making it consistent to incorporate the similar bonus provisions. The remaining DMC areas were not recommended for increases to FAR limits. Instead, alternative ways for increasing floor area above the base are proposed, consistent with objectives for making these areas more attractive for housing. These include a new form of TDR, "DMC Housing TDR" (discussed in more detail in this report), and the option to use other bonuses and TDR, including the housing/childcare bonus provisions, as allowed under the 75%-25% floor area bonus program. As in DOC 1 and DOC 2, the current recommendation also includes a new provision to require the first increment of FAR above the base FAR in all DMC areas to be gained by meeting high-performance green building standards.

Repeal bonus provisions for street-level uses and short term parking. While the 2001 amendments restricted the use of these features for floor area bonuses to special circumstances, it is now proposed to eliminate them as bonusable items. The exemption from FAR calculations would continue.

**Explanation of proposal.** For reasons discussed above, the amended Downtown bonus and TDR programs adopted in 2001 continued to allow certain bonuses for increasing floor area for the first FAR above the base in DOC 1 and DOC 2, and as an option for FAR increases in DMC zones. Current proposals for FAR increases in these zones would eliminate any further need to

use these features for bonuses. Their elimination also reduces competition for higher priority bonus features, including public open space and landmark preservation, that can only be used for 25% of the total bonus floor area allowed above the base FAR. Furthermore, the proposal to repeal the parking requirement nullifies the short-term parking bonus, since it is based on parking provided in excess of the amount required. The proposal recognizes that these are desirable features that provide a public benefit by continuing to allow floor area occupied by these uses to be exempt from FAR calculations.

# Limit floor area exemption for long-term parking above grade to DMC zones retaining a maximum FAR of 7.

**Explanation of proposal.** Currently in the DMC zone, parking above grade (e.g., not underground) within a structure is not included in the calculation of permitted FAR, due to the relatively low commercial density limit and the location of some DMC areas where water table conditions make excavation for below grade parking very costly. This exemption would continue in DMC areas where no increase in commercial FAR is proposed. However, in other DMC areas where the maximum FAR is increased to 10, parking above grade would be included in FAR calculations, similar to other higher density commercial zones.

#### Exempt space occupied by shower facilities for bicyclists from FAR calculations.

**Explanation of proposal.** As with other public benefit features, projects providing this amenity for a bonus could exempt the space occupied by the facilities from permitted FAR calculations.

#### Exempt floor area of designated Seattle landmark structures.

**Explanation of proposal.** Currently, landmark structures can sell unused commercial development rights, or Landmark TDR. Landmark TDR may be used on a receiving site by commercial developers to achieve up to 25% of the floor area above the base FAR. The amount of Landmark TDR available to sell from a site is established by the base FAR of the zone where the landmark property is located, and is the difference between the amount of floor area allowed by the base FAR minus the "chargeable" floor area of the landmark structure. Consequently, landmarks occupied by "chargeable" uses (uses not exempt from FAR calculations), including most commercial uses, can only transfer unused base FAR. Since many landmarks occupy small lots, the floor area of the structure relative to the lot size often results in an FAR that is close to or exceeds the base FAR, meaning there is little or no floor area remaining to transfer.

Under this proposal, the full base floor area of a designated Seattle Landmark structure located in a Downtown zone outside of an historic or special review district would be exempt from FAR calculations, enabling landmarks to sell, through TDR transactions, floor area equivalent to the base FAR of the lot, minus any chargeable floor area above the base FAR. With this additional floor area exemption for landmark structures (as is allowed for other public benefit features, such as street-level uses, housing, and public atriums), the amount of development rights available to sell and transfer could increase significantly, providing landmark owners an opportunity to

access revenue for rehabilitating and maintaining these structures to meet public preservation objectives.

While this action will result in an increase in the potential supply of floor area eligible to transfer, transfers from landmark structures have been limited. The limited use of TDR for landmark preservation suggests that there is a need to increase the attractiveness of the TDR incentive. Deducting chargeable floor area above the base FAR from the amount of floor area eligible to transfer will help prevent an oversupply of development rights on the market at any given time, while focusing the use of this incentive on buildings most at risk.

### Exempt floor area in major retail stores located in the retail core and periphery.

Explanation of proposal. Prior to the 2001 amendments, a major retail store, or department store, was established in the Code as a public benefit feature eligible for a floor area bonus in the Downtown Retail Core (DRC) zone. As a public benefit feature, the floor area in this use was also exempt from FAR calculations. The bonus for this feature was never used, and it was eliminated in 2001, along with the floor area exemption. As the retail core expands eastward, the potential exists for future major retail stores on the edge of the retail core. The proposal would not re-introduce a bonus for this feature, but would re-establish the floor area exemption so that mixed-use projects could include a department store without a reduction in the amount of floor area allowed for other commercial uses that may help subsidize the retail operation. The public benefit of this particular use is its contribution and support to the vitality of the Downtown retail core. The floor area exemption for major retail stores would be limited to a mapped area, including the DRC zone and immediately adjacent areas, to recognize areas where the core has expanded, while limiting it to locations where the use will reinforce and not dilute shopping activity in the core.

# **Section 13: Bonus floor area for amenity features**

The proposed increases in maximum density suggest the need to adjust several bonus provisions that were amended in 2001. At that time, there was much less "bonusable" floor area between the base and maximum FAR limits than would occur with this proposal. The more limited bonus floor area overall and the provision that requires bonused floor area to be distributed according to a 25%/75% split (allocating 75% of the bonus floor area to housing and childcare incentives and 25% to all other forms of TDR and public benefit features), meant that the non-housing bonuses had to compete for a very limited share of total bonus floor area. To address this new condition and promote a variety of public amenity features in a project, limits were set for certain public benefit features on the amount of bonus floor area that could be gained by any single feature competing for the 25% share of bonus floor area. Now, with the increase in the total amount of bonus floor area that must be gained through bonuses as a result of raising the maximum FAR, these limitations are no longer needed. However, other changes that help clarify limits on where certain features are bonusable will help reinforce the desired priority for using certain bonuses where they can provide the most benefit.

Specify by zone where certain public benefit features are eligible for a floor area bonus, according to standards in the Public Benefit Features Director's Rule.

**Explanation of proposal.** Several bonus features, such as the urban plaza, are identified as bonusable public benefit features in this section, but only the Director's Rule specifies that the bonus for this particular amenity is limited to the office core zones (DOC 1 and DOC 2), where it provides a benefit consistent with the function of these areas. To avoid confusion and make it easier to understand where bonuses apply, the language is amended to identify the zones where different public amenity features are eligible for a bonus, if such a limitation applies.

Revise bonus for transit tunnel station access to include fixed rail station access and modify existing Map 1K Public Benefit Features to be consistent with the broader application of this bonus. Return original bonus value for this amenity to 1.0 FAR.

**Explanation of proposal.** Current provisions allow for a bonus for different types of access to transit tunnel stations. The bonus can be provided for mechanical access, at-grade access, or an easement through a site, but all three options are intended to provide access to below-grade stations along the transit tunnel alignment. With other high- or intermediate-capacity fixed rail systems planned to serve Downtown, including the monorail, the bonus is proposed to be expanded to allow projects in other locations along fixed rail transit routes to receive a bonus for incorporating transit station access on their sites to serve these facilities.

Under the 2001 amendments, the bonus value for providing transit station access was reduced from 1.0 FAR to 0.5 FAR, reflecting the reduction in the gap between base and maximum FAR that occurred after the bonus was originally established in 1985, and the greater competition created for use of non-housing bonus features through amendments in 2001. With the proposed increases in maximum FAR, the 1.0 FAR of bonus floor area will permit the use of other bonuses on a site, while increasing the incentive to provide a high-priority feature aiding transit access Downtown and increasing comfort and convenience for transit riders.

Allow the Director to approve a bonus for off-site open space that may not meet the standards for bonusable open space features in the Public Benefit Features Rule.

**Explanation of proposal.** Currently, the Code allows the Director to approve a floor area bonus for public open space provided off-site, provided the open space feature meets the standards in the Public Benefit Features Rule, and other conditions are satisfied. This proposal recognizes that the best location for public open space may not be on the development site and also identifies desirable types in Downtown that are not currently included among the open space types listed in the Public Benefit Features Rule. These additional types include grassy landscaped "greens" and more active recreation spaces. Although these open spaces may not be appropriate everywhere, the amendment provides discretion for the Director to extend the bonus as appropriate. Other conditions that currently apply, including proximity to the site receiving the bonus, minimum size, and easement ensuring access and use would continue to apply.

Furthermore, the open space would need to be identified in a Downtown open space plan (as yet not in existence).

# Repeal additional limits on FAR increases allowed through bonuses for small open spaces.

**Explanation of proposal.** To address the concern that too much of the bonus floor area allowed in the 25% portion of floor area allowed above the base FAR would be gained through bonuses for small, less usable open space, a limit was set on the amount of floor area such features could account for (1 FAR or 15% of total bonus floor area above the base, whichever is less). With the greater amount of floor area that can be gained in the 25% portion of floor area bonused above the base, this conditional constraint is no longer necessary and will be repealed.

### Include shower facilities for bicyclists as part of the public restroom bonus.

**Explanation of proposal.** To support greater use of bicycles for travel Downtown, bicycle parking requirements are proposed to be modified, as well as an incentive to encourage projects to include shower facilities for bike commuters. The 2001 amendments created bonus for public restrooms, and the proposal is to expand this bonus to cover shower facilities.

### Clarification of cash payment option for bonusable open space amenity features.

**Explanation of proposal.** The Code currently requires that the bonus for public open space must be provided by performance. There is an exception for Green Street improvements, for which the Director can accept a cash payment in-lieu of a developer making the improvement. This can also, at the Director's discretion, be allowed for a public open space, if the open space meets certain conditions. The revised language is to clarify that a cash payment can be made in lieu of providing other types of public open space amenities on-site to receive a bonus for those amenities.

# **Section 14: Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)**

Under the proposed changes, provisions for two new types of TDR are included in this section; a DMC Housing TDR and a Landmark Housing TDR.

Permit transfer of unused commercial development rights from lots located in the DMC zone that are developed with new affordable housing

**Explanation of proposal.** The intent of this proposal is to create more housing sites in the DMC zone through an incentive that would allow the owner of a site developed with affordable housing to sell the unused commercial development rights from that site. The development rights could be purchased by a developer of a commercial project on another lot in a DMC area and transferred to that lot as bonus floor area above the base FAR. Under the proposal, any lot located in a DMC zone with a maximum FAR of 7 or greater and developed with affordable housing would be eligible to sell unused commercial development rights. Only lots located in a DMC zone with a maximum FAR of 7 would be able to purchase development rights from these

"sending" lots. On the "receiving" lots, this transferred floor area could be added above the first increment of FAR above the base, up to the maximum FAR of 7. The first increment of FAR above the base (0.25 FAR) can be gained only through use of the high-performance green building incentive. Developers may either elect to use DMC Housing TDR or the 25%-75% bonus and TDR options to achieve maximum FAR in DMC zones with a maximum FAR of 7.

In order to be eligible as a DMC Housing TDR site, a certain amount of housing must be developed that is affordable to households with incomes up to 50% and 80% of median income, and the housing must be maintained at that level for 50 years.

Permit all base FAR from lots occupied by designated landmark structures converted to qualifying residential uses to be transferred to eligible receiving lots in other Downtown zones and included as one of the housing and childcare options for which up to 75% of floor area above the Base may be achieved.

Explanation of proposal. Currently, designated landmark structures can transfer unused development rights to receiving sites, but these transferred development rights generally can only be added as part of the 25% portion of bonus floor area allowed above the base FAR. An exception is for landmarks occupied by low-income housing, which are treated like any other eligible Housing TDR sending site, and the transferred floor area can also be used as part of the 75% portion of bonus floor area allowed above the base FAR for housing and childcare. Under another proposed amendment, the full base FAR could be transferred from lots occupied by designated landmarks structures that will contain low-income housing after renovation. This amendment would enable development rights transferred from landmarks converted to low-income housing (affordable for households with incomes up to 50% and 80% of median income) to be used to achieve up to 75% of the floor area allowed above the first increment of FAR above the base.

Allowing Landmark Housing TDR to be used in the 75% portion now reserved for affordable housing and childcare creates an incentive for converting landmark structures to residential use and also providing affordable housing units. The incentive furthers both Downtown housing goals, which seek to provide housing for all income levels, while also expanding the ability of commercial developers to use TDR that furthers preservation objectives.

# Section 16: Affordable Housing Bonus for residential use on high-rise structures

Allow an increase in height and bulk for residential use in high-rise towers as an incentive to:

- contribute to the Downtown supply of affordable housing as mitigation for impacts of high density residential use on the demand for affordable housing; and
- 2) incorporate high-performance green building practices based on achieving LEED NC certification as mitigation for environmental impacts of high density residential development.

**Explanation of proposal.** The Preferred Alternative includes several proposals to encourage development of more housing in Downtown, including increases in the height and density allowed for residential projects throughout most of the study area. Unlike commercial development, residential use in Downtown is not subject to the same type of provisions that limit permitted density to a base level unless specific measures are taken to address some of the impacts associated with further increases in density up to the maximum limits allowed. Under this proposal, residential projects that build to the maximum permitted height and densities under the proposed changes would be allowed to do so in exchange for contributions to affordable housing, to address some of the impacts of these projects on the demand for affordable housing. In order to build to the maximum permitted height and density, these projects would be required to meet high-performance green building standards by achieving LEED NC certification.

This incentive is established through height and bulk controls. Projects that exceed a height limit of 160 feet are limited to a specified height limit and an average of floor area if there is no participation in the incentive program. Any floor area added beyond these limits, up to established maximums, must be gained by meeting the following two conditions:

- 1) the project must be LEED NC certified; and
- 2) the project must include affordable housing or the developer must contribute to a fund for affordable housing.

## **Section 18: Required Open Space for Major Office Projects**

Clarify option for payment in lieu of providing required open space in major office projects and allow the Director to modify distance and size requirements for public open space provided off-site to meet the requirement.

**Explanation of proposal.** Currently, office developments over 85,000 square feet must provide open space available to building occupants at an amount equivalent to 20 square foot of open space for every 1,000 square feet of office area. The Code also includes options for providing the open space off-site or for making a cash payment to be used to fund Green Street improvements or, under special agreement between the Director and project property owner, the acquisition or development of other public open space. A bonus may be allowed for funding green street improvements.

Off-site option. The proposed amendments are intended to allow the Director more flexibility in approving sites that could qualify as off-site alternatives for public open space meeting the requirement. Currently, the site must be within ¼ mile of the office project subject to the requirement, with a minimum size of 5,000 square feet. The proposed amendment gives the Director discretion to modify these conditions to respond to special circumstances so that the project may provide more usable and accessible open space than would result from strict adherence to the standards.

<u>Payment in lieu.</u> These amendments clarify that the cash payment alternative to providing the required open space on site can be used for Green Street improvements and other types of public open space. The amendments also clarify that, in addition to green street improvements, a bonus

can be granted for funds provided for acquisition and/or improvement of the other types of public open space. This change recognizes that funding open space improvements other than Green Streets might better serve the project subject to the open space requirement either because of proximity or types of activities these spaces could accommodate, and that the public spaces provided also create a public benefit that may warrant a floor area bonus.

### **Section 22: Parking**

- Repeal minimum parking requirement for non-residential uses throughout Downtown except for specific uses in the International Special Review District.
- Expand criteria for allowing increases in the maximum limit on parking to provide flexibility to accommodate short term parking serving Downtown shopping activity.
- Revise bicycle parking requirements

<u>Eliminate minimum requirement.</u> Consistent with proposed changes to parking requirements in other urban centers, the minimum requirement for short- and long-term parking for non-residential uses is proposed to be eliminated Downtown. The maximum limit on the amount of long-term parking that can be provided for all non-residential uses would be retained as the maximum limit for all parking, both short- and long-term. Currently, residential use Downtown is not subject to a parking requirement.

The current maximum limit on long-term parking is one space for each 1,000 square feet of non-residential use. The minimum requirement, which includes long- and short-term parking, differs by use and by location with respect to an area of high or moderate transit access. Currently, a variety of measures are allowed to decrease the minimum parking requirement, such as incentives to provide car pool spaces, ridesharing, greater transit use and other alternatives to parking for single occupant vehicles. Eliminating the minimum parking requirement eliminates these distinctions in required parking according to use and access, and also eliminates the incentives for reductions in the amounts of parking required.

Additional amendments will be required in Chapter 23.66 Special Review District to correct references to parking provisions proposed in 23.49.

Allow parking beyond maximum limit to meet short-term parking needs. The maximum limit on all parking for non-residential uses, both short- and long-term, is proposed to be the same as the current maximum limit on long term parking. Including short-term parking in the new maximum will reduce the amount of parking allowed to slightly below the current limit. To ensure that adequate short term parking can continue to be provided as needed to accommodate Downtown shopping activity, the existing criteria used by the Director to allow parking to exceed the maximum limit are proposed to be amended to include consideration of short-term parking needs.

<u>Revise bicycle parking requirements.</u> Current bicycle parking requirements are based on the amount of vehicle parking required. Eliminating the vehicular parking requirement creates the

need for a new bicycle parking standard. The proposal is to include a standard that is based on use and takes into consideration projections for the share of Downtown commute trips anticipated to be made by bicycle. Provisions are also included for location and access to bicycle parking and options for in-lieu-of payment for providing bicycle parking.

# Section 29: Modifications of plazas and other bonused features and replacement of public benefit features

This provision is amended to clarify that, when floor area is gained as a bonus from a public benefit feature, and that feature is later replaced, the amount of floor area that was added to the project must then be accounted for through the use of bonuses as allowed under current Code provisions for increasing floor area above the base FAR. Many bonus features were provided under previous Code provisions that established different ratios for the floor area value of the bonus. Determining an equivalent value for the bonus feature if it is replaced has been problematic. This proposal would provide a more standard treatment of these situations by treating the floor area gained, regardless of the bonus feature, as if it were being added to a new project under current provisions.

The proposal would also eliminate the cash option which allowed for a payment to the City of an amount equivalent to the floor area value of the public benefit feature. Under the modified language, the cash option could be accomplished through payment to the affordable housing fund and other options allowing payment in-lieu of providing a public benefit feature on-site for a bonus.

# **Sections 31 – 33: Planned Community Developments**

The Planned Community Development (PCD) process was established in 1985 in the original Downtown Plan to allow for more flexible application of regulations and standards for major development on large sites or Downtown areas that could enhance the overall character and function of an area and be of significant public benefit. The process currently requires Council review and approval to determine the public benefit to be achieved and the extent to which standards can be modified and mitigation may be required to address potential negative impacts.

The PCD process applies to a defined area and allows the floor area permitted by applicable density limits on individual parcels in the area to be combined and distributed among parcels. The result is that the density on a particular parcel may exceed the limit otherwise allowed by the zone, provided that the density overall is within the established limits. However, certain specified standards, including height limits and view corridor setbacks, cannot be adjusted through this process. In exchange for allowing this flexibility, the project must result in a significant public benefit, as determined by Council. The PCD process has been used once to date in the development of the Union Station corridor, allowing a redistribution of permitted density across several blocks and establishing conditions for preservation and scale relationships with the landmark Union Station structure, views, open space and pedestrian connections.

The following amendments are proposed to the Planned Community Development

#### provisions:

- The current process would be retained for use in the Pioneer Square Preservation District and the International Special Review District.
- The PCD process would be amended for other Downtown areas, changing approval of a PCD from a Council decision to a Type II land use decision requiring approval by the Director of DPD, including DOC 1 as an eligible location for use of the PCD process, and making the minimum size requirement more flexible.
- Provisions for public parks through a PCD in DOC 1 would be repealed.

Planned Community Development (PCD) in Special Review Districts. The original PCD provisions are maintained for zones within the Pioneer Square and International District Special Review Districts. As noted above, the PCD process has been used in the development of the Union Station corridor in the International District. Given the special character of the Review Districts and the involvement of the special review district boards, the PCD process would continue to require Council approval in these districts. The City Council can decide whether an appropriate public benefit has been achieved through the process and impose conditions appropriate to mitigate negative impacts as part of their approval. In addition to limiting the requirement for Council's approval of PCDs to Pioneer Square (PSM) and International District (IDM, IDR) zones, the current provisions are also modified to specifically identify historic preservation, public view protection, improving transit facilities, and promoting sustainable development practices as public benefits that can be achieved through the PCD process.

<u>Planned Community Development (PCD) in the Downtown Commercial Core, Belltown, and Denny Triangle.</u> The original PCD process would be modified for other Downtown areas outside special review districts as follows:

- Decision making authority. The process would be amended to allow approval by the
  Director of DPD, making the decision in these areas a Type II land use decision, as opposed
  to the current status as a Type IV decision requiring Council approval. This change is
  intended to make the PCD process easier and more predictable, thus encouraging its use as a
  tool allowing flexibility for more creative design and development solutions than would
  otherwise occur through strict adherence to the development standards.
- Additional public benefit. Historic preservation, public open space, public view protection, concentrations of new housing and services for households with mixed incomes, improving transit facilities, improvements in pedestrian circulation and urban form, and promoting sustainable development are additional public benefits that may be achieved through the PCD process. Benefits of employment and increased public revenue, which are underlying objectives of the zoning, are deleted.
- Minimum size requirements. Currently, the minimum size of a PCD is 100,000 square feet, and the area of public rights-of-way is not to be included. The proposal would maintain the 100,000 square foot limit, but would allow right-of-way area to be included if improvements to the right-of-way, including enhanced streetscapes or improved circulation, are among the improvements to be achieved through the PCD. An additional change is to include the DOC 1 zone as an eligible area for use of the PCD process, and the rationale for this proposal is discussed below.

Planned Community Development for Public Parks in DOC 1. The original PCD provisions excluded the DOC 1 zone as an eligible location. At the time, DOC 1 had a significantly higher maximum FAR limit of 20, and no maximum height limit. The added flexibility offered through the process was seen as unnecessary and, because there was no height limit, there was concern that the PCD process could allow a scale of development well beyond what City policies and zoning provisions anticipated. With the passage of CAP in 1989, a height limit was established and FAR limit reduced in DOC 1. At that time, there was potential for the redevelopment of large sites to include a major public open space in the office core, and thus the PCD process was made available in the DOC 1 zone for that purpose. The process, however, was never used for this purpose, with the Benaroya Symphony Hall ultimately developed on the primary candidate site.

Under proposed changes to height and density limits, the limits in DOC 1 would still be lower than those existing at the time the zone was excluded as an eligible location for a PCD, so the potential negative consequences that this prohibition originally intended to avoid are not an issue now. Furthermore, with more intensive development of the area, the PCD process offers numerous potential benefits, in addition to public open space, that could enhance the area. The proposal would repeal the current section establishing the PCD process in DOC 1 for limited use in providing a public park, and include DOC 1 among the eligible locations for use of the more expansive PCD process described above.

## Section 35: City/County Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) Program

In 1999, the City established the Denny Triangle Transfer of Development Credit (TDC) program and amended downtown zoning to allow a 30% height increase for development participating in the program in the DOC 2 and DMC zones within the Denny Triangle neighborhood. This height increase allows residential and mixed-use projects to accommodate additional residential floor area gained through the purchase of development credits from rural lands in King County and contributions to a City fund for public amenities in the Denny Triangle neighborhood. The TDC program differs from current transfer of development rights program (TDR) in that it only allows for additional residential density. Since residential development downtown is not subject to a density limit, the only option for increasing the residential floor area in a project is to allow more height. The TDC program cannot be used by commercial projects to increase non-residential floor area above existing base and maximum FAR limits. Therefore, it does not compete with the TDR and public amenity bonus programs currently in place to accommodate commercial density increases.

The TDC program is a pilot program, and, unless renewed, is scheduled to expire July 30, 2005. The program has resulted in the expenditure of funds by King County for public amenities in the Denny Triangle, including \$100,000 for design work on a pilot Green Street design. The City and County interlocal agreement also commits the County to provide additional funds for public amenities in the Denny Triangle once a specified amount of rural conservation credits have been purchased, and to include a significant public open space as part of the redevelopment of the Convention Place Station site, under County ownership. One private development, 2200

Westlake, has purchased five rural conservation credits and included public open space improvements on-site to meet amenity credit requirements.

Under the proposed amendments for height and density increases in the Denny Triangle, the TDC program would be repealed. The substantial increase in height and commercial FAR proposed for most of the DOC 2 area – an increase from 300 feet to 600 feet – would make the TDC program less viable. Elsewhere, increases in height limits to 400 feet for residential use would be achieved through bonuses for affordable housing, accompanied with new bulk controls on residential towers. This combination of increased height with additional bulk controls and a bonus for affordable housing would replace the TDC incentive. Limiting the bonus to affordable housing is more consistent with the City's priorities for providing housing for as broad a range of household incomes as possible. Incentives for high-performance green building and the overall emphasis on creating opportunities to accommodate more housing and job growth within Downtown are seen as a viable alternative to reducing the sprawl that threatens rural King County lands.

### **Section 36: Combined Lot Development**

Create a new provision to allow separate lots located on the same block, whether contiguous or not, to transfer permitted base and maximum FAR.

Currently, unused base FAR on a lot, regardless of use, can be transferred to any other lot on the same block. This type of transfer – sometimes called "within-block TDR"- provides an incentive to maintain a variable scale of development on a block by allowing unused development rights to be sold from existing, smaller structures for use in a new project on the same block. While the sending lot is allowed to transfer all of its unused base floor area, the amount of floor area that the receiving lot can acquire is restricted to either 15% of the total FAR above the base FAR on the lot, or 1 FAR, whichever is less. Among the proposed amendments to the TDR section of the Downtown Code is a provision that would eliminate the 1 FAR restriction, and the language is clarified to indicate that the 15% restriction applies to floor area above the first FAR above the base. However, the amount of floor area that could be added on the receiving lot remains significantly less than what was allowed when within-block TDR was incorporated into the 1985 Downtown zoning. At that time, up to 50% of the floor area above the base could be gained through this form of TDR. Even under those conditions, the transfer was only allowed for increasing FAR above the base, and did not allow any increase above the maximum FAR on the receiving lot.

Under the proposed combined lot development provision, the transfer of both unused base and maximum FAR from one lot on a block to any other lot on the same block would be allowed, provided that:

- 1) all bonus FAR above the base must be transferred from the sending lot before any unused base FAR is transferred, requiring that the public benefits be provided in order to add floor area to the receiving lot:
- 2) the added FAR must be accommodated under the height limits and development standards that apply to the receiving lot; and

3) the combined lot transfer results in a significant public benefit, as determined by the Director.

This transfer could result in a higher FAR on the receiving lot than otherwise allowed by the maximum FAR limit, provided that the combined FAR of sending and receiving lots does not exceed the maximum FAR limit. Allowing this form of development rights transfer between lots on the same block allows flexibility to address specific urban design or development objectives that may apply to a particular block. For example, a wide array of public benefits could be accommodated, including public view protection, preservation of existing valued structures, new public open space, or better integration of new projects with surrounding development.

Subchapter II

# Section 38: Prohibited and Conditional Uses in DOC 1, DOC 2 and DMC zones

- Prohibit principal use long-term parking garages in DOC 1, DOC 2 and DMC areas.
- Continue to allow principal use short-term and residential parking garages and surface parking areas as conditional uses in mapped locations.
- Continue current prohibition on adult motion picture theaters and panorams, which only applies in DMC only

Under the proposed amendments, the separate subchapters for the DOC 1, DOC 2 and DMC zones would be consolidated into one subchapter. For the most part, the existing use provisions for all three zones are the same, with a few exceptions, and these exceptions are either maintained or addressed through the amendments. One of the proposed changes is to further restrict principal use parking garages, consistent with effort to reduce commuter trips Downtown by car and with the proposal to eliminate minimum parking requirements. Currently, principal use parking garages for long-term, short-term and residential parking garages are allowed as a conditional use in mapped locations. This provision would be amended to prohibit principal use long-term parking in DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC areas, while continuing to allow short-term and residential principal use parking garages as a conditional use in mapped locations.

<u>Principal use parking garages.</u> Currently, principal use parking garages are permitted as conditional uses in limited, mapped areas, most of which are in DOC 2 and DMC zones in the Denny Triangle and DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones on the eastern edge of the Commercial Core along I-5. The proposed amendments would prohibit principal use parking garages throughout the three zones.

<u>Surface parking areas.</u> Under the proposed amendments, some DOC 2 areas would be reclassified as DMC, but would essentially be governed by the same standards that exist today, while some DMC areas will remain DMC, but density limits will be increased to levels that currently apply to DOC 2 zones. Provisions related to surface parking areas would be amended to maintain conditions as they currently apply in those DOC 2 areas that become DMC areas, and to treat the relevant existing DMC areas the same as DOC 2 areas.

Also, under current provisions, the criteria for reviewing surface parking lots as conditional uses are now included in Subchapter I with parking requirements. With the proposed elimination of the parking requirement, it will be more logical to include these criteria in this section where they are currently referenced.

<u>Adult motion picture theaters and panorams.</u> Adult motion picture theaters and panorams are permitted in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones, but prohibited in DMC zones. With the consolidation of provisions for the three zones, the prohibition in DMC zones would be retained.

## Section 41: Street façade and street setback requirements

- Consolidate street façade and setback standards that currently appear in separate subchapters for DOC 1, DOC 2 and DMC zones, with appropriate changes to map references.
- Modify provisions for determining facade transparency and blank façade limits on steeply sloping streets.
- Add a new screening requirement along street frontages of above-grade parking.
- Incorporate setback and landscaping standards that apply to DOC 2 and DMC zones in Denny Triangle.

#### Explanation of proposed changes.

Street façade and setback standards. To reduce duplication of standards in the Code, the provisions for DOC 1, DOC 2 and DMC zones are consolidated in one subchapter. A new chart is provided that combines minimum façade heights according to pedestrian street classifications for all three zones. One change concerns standards for minimum façade height and setback limits on Green Streets in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones, which were not included when the Downtown Code was originally adopted. Since that time, additional Green Streets have been designated, some of which are located in the DOC 2 zone. Under the proposed amendments, the same standards originally adopted for DMC zones would apply in all three zones.

Transparency requirements and limits on blank facades. This proposal is included as a "clean-up" action to address a recurring issue with transparency requirements and blank façade limits in the Downtown code. To apply standards for the amount of transparency required along street façades and limits on blank facades, the Code defines a physical "zone" where the pedestrian will likely have the greatest visual contact with the façade of a structure (the area between two feet and eight feet above the sidewalk). A percentage of this façade area must be transparent, and blank facades are also limited to a specified percentage. Both percentages vary according to the pedestrian street classification and according to the steepness of the street (slopes of 7.5% or less, or more than 7.5%). A higher standard applies along the more important "Class I" Pedestrian Streets, while standards are relaxed on steep slopes where it may be more difficult to consistently provide openings along a sloping façade into interior spaces due to the changing elevation of the street. To address this problem, the area of the physical "zone" is reduced by one-third for facades on steep slopes, redefined to between 4 and 8 feet above the sidewalk,

instead of 2 to 8 feet. The percentage requirements are also adjusted to account for the reduction in the area of the physical zone where these limits apply. In addition to applying in the DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC zones, these changes would also apply to the Downtown Mixed Residential (DMR) and Downtown Harborfront 2 (DH2) zones.

Screening of above-grade parking. Additional screening standards are proposed to address the visual impact of above-grade parking, especially in high-rise residential structures. Unlike long-term parking for commercial uses, parking accessory to residential units is not subject to an FAR limit and therefore there is less incentive to provide it below-grade (e.g., underground). However, because of the potential impact that providing parking below-grade could have on housing affordability, the proposal does not restrict above-grade parking, but seeks instead to address the visual impact of such parking on the street environment. On larger sites over 20,000 square feet, additional screening requirements apply to parking located above a height of 40 feet in a structure. Separation by another use is required along a specified portion of street frontages, and required at corners, which are the locations most visible to pedestrians. In addition to applying to DOC 1, DOC 2 and DMC zones, these proposed standards would apply to most other Downtown zones as well, including the Downtown Retail Core (DRC), DMR and DH2 zones.

<u>Denny Triangle Landscaping and Setback Requirements.</u> As part of the work related to establishing the Transfer of Development Credit Program in the Denny Triangle and implementing recommendations from the Denny Triangle Neighborhood Plan, additional standards were applied in the DMC and DOC 2 zones to enhance the area for housing development. Among these are landscaped setback requirements along designated Green Streets, required landscaping in sidewalk areas, and required landscaping of setback areas along street frontages. These standards are retained and moved into this subchapter as part of the consolidation of existing standards that apply DOC 1, DOC 2 and DMC zones.

# **Section 42: Upper Level Development Standards**

Amendments are proposed to the upper-level development standards that regulate building bulk in the DOC 1, DOC 2 and DMC zones. Currently, the same standards apply to all uses. Under the proposal, different standards would apply to structures of 125 feet in height or less, high-rise non-residential structures, and high-rise residential towers. The proposed standards reflect the different characteristics and functional requirements of structures accommodating different uses. For non-residential structures, new standards would replace and simplify existing requirements, reducing the range of conditions now addressed through a complicated series of general requirements, while adding new standards addressing specific conditions, such as the overall width of towers. For residential structures, proposed standards would dictate less bulky tower forms relative to what is currently allowed.

- Repeal current upper level development standards that establish lot coverage limit areas and maximum façade length requirements and replace with new standards for façade modulation and maximum tower width limits for nonresidential structures.
- Establish new standards for high-rise residential structures, including limits on lot coverage, average floor area, maximum floor area, and maximum structure

width.

- Establish tower spacing requirements for all structures above 125 feet in height in DMC and DOC 2 zones.
- Establish a transparency requirement for residential tower facades.

#### **Explanation of Proposals**

Upper-level development standards. Today, all structures over 125 feet in height and with floor sizes greater than 15,000 square feet are subject to upper-level development standards that limit the extent to which structures can extend out to the street property lines of a site. Preventing the facades of high-rise structures from rising uninterrupted up from the street edge helps reduce wind downdrafts onto sidewalk areas, while also making buildings appear less bulky to pedestrians. Rather than mandate continuous setbacks at various elevations—a solution that was considered undesirable because of the resulting "wedding cake" building form that could result—the approach instead was to define an area along the street property lines of a site at the 125-foot and 240-foot elevations, and limit the amount that a structure could cover in these areas. The formula varied by site size and encouraged setbacks at corners and at the highest elevations. In addition to the coverage limits, there is a limit on the length of walls allowed within 15 feet of the street edge—exceeding this length requires that the wall must set back at least 15 feet from the street edge for a minimum of distance 60 feet, before being permitted to return back to the edge. Consequently, structures could extend to the property line for a certain amount, step back, and return again.

In addition to being complicated to work with, these standards do create some constraints for development on sites that are only one lot deep. For developments with more than one structure, the standards tend to push buildings closer together in the interior of the site. One problem is that the standards were developed when the greater height limits in the office core zones allowed buildings to extend higher to accommodate permitted floor area. The reduction in height limits without any adjustments to these standards, created the need for buildings to "push out" more towards the street, increasing the conflicts with standards intended to limit such encroachments along the street edge. While larger sites allowed the flexibility to move towers away from the street towards the center of the block, development on half-block sites continued to be more constrained. To meet the upper-level standards, buildings need to become wider and narrower to accommodate the setback areas, or developers find it more advantageous to assemble larger sites through alley vacations to accommodate tower forms that allow more marketable floor sizes and configurations.

Under the proposal, the current standards would be modified for tall, non-residential structures, while residential towers would be subject to new standards specifically developed for this building type. The coverage limit areas would be eliminated. Instead, for non-residential structures, there would only be limits on the length of facades allowed within 15 feet of street property lines. The width of structures would be able to exceed these limits, provided the façade "modulates" – or sets back at least 15 feet from the street edge for a minimum distance of 60 feet. Unlike current standards, where the coverage limit areas do not apply until the 125 foot height elevation, the modulation requirements would begin above 85 feet. Furthermore, rather

than setting two elevations for adjusting coverage limit requirements (125 feet and 240 feet), to reduce the amount of structure extending to the street property line as the building increases in height, the number of elevations where modulation requirements are adjusted increases to four (85 feet, 125 feet, 240 feet, and above 450 feet). This reflects, in part, the overall increase in building height which, in some instances, is doubled. To avoid standards that penalize small lot development and to encourage smaller floorsizes, the proposed dimensions allow continuous facades for the full width and depth of small lots (120 feet by 120 feet) up to a height of 240 feet, and the current exemption from upper level standards for smaller structures with floor sizes of 15,000 square feet or less above a height of 125 feet is retained for non-residential structures.

Another change is the overall limit on the maximum width of a tower above 240 feet in height on larger sites. This standard is intended to orient the bulk of Downtown's biggest and tallest buildings so that the wider profile of a structure runs parallel to views westward toward Elliott Bay, rather than perpendicular to these views. The standard only applies to larger sites with the flexibility to position towers to accommodate this requirement without significantly constraining the size and configuration of tower floors.

<u>Standards for highrise residential structures.</u> The proposal includes new bulk controls specifically developed for highrise residential towers. The standards both control bulk and provide incentives through increases in height and bulk for projects that contribute to affordable housing and qualify as a high-performance green building based on LEED certification.

There are five major components to the bulk controls:

- 1) Provisions allowing maximum coverage for the "base" portion of a structure—defined as the portion below 85 feet in height and expected to accommodate street level uses, potentially some above grade parking, and other uses that may require the largest floor sizes.
- 2) Above the base structure, an average floor area is specified for the total area of all floors up to the "base" height limit allowed without the use of the affordable housing and high-performance green building bonus.
- 3) A maximum average floor area is specified for the tower up to the maximum height limit; increases in average floor area up to this maximum, and any floor area added above the base height up to the maximum height limit, must be gained through the affordable housing and high-performance green building bonus.
- 4) In addition to limits on average floor area, a maximum floor area for any individual floor is established; and
- 5) There are maximum limits on the widths of tower structures above the base structure to ensure a predictable scale and achieve the desired "slender" profile.

The averaging of floor sizes allows more flexibility in the design of residential towers, promoting greater variety and ability to adapt to site-specific conditions, while maintaining the overall slender tower form desired. The following example demonstrates how the bulk controls would apply to a project in the DMC zone with a maximum height limit of 400 feet for residential use.

For the base structure, 100% lot coverage is allowed up to a height of 85 feet. For projects that do not use bonuses, an average floor area of 10,000 square feet is allowed above the 85-foot base structure up to a height of 290 feet (about 20 floors). For projects that opt to use the bonuses, the average floor area is increased to 10,700 square feet up to the maximum height of 400 feet. The maximum average floor area of 10,700 square feet is derived from a model tower form that assumes maximum floor sizes of 11,500 square feet for 20 floors between the 85 foot base structure height and the 290 foot height limit, with another 11 floors at 9,000 square feet extending above 290 feet to the 400-foot maximum height limit. The total average floor area for all 31 floors of the tower is 10,700 square feet.

The bonus for floor area exceeding the 10,000 square foot average floor area and located above the 290-foot base height limit is gained by: 1) achieving LEED NC certification for the project, and 2) contributing a specified dollar amount per square foot of bonus floor area to an affordable housing fund, or by including a specified amount of affordable housing in the project. There are additional restrictions that limit the maximum size of any single floor to 11,500 square feet, and a maximum limit on tower width, ranging from 150 feet to 115 feet depending on the building elevation.

Tower spacing requirements. In addition to standards for the height and bulk of individual towers, there are also proposed tower spacing requirements for DOC 2 and DMC zones that require a minimum amount of separation between structures over 125 feet in height. The distance varies by zone, with a maximum required distance of 80 feet, although structures on different blocks do not need to be separated by more than the width of adjacent streets. In DOC 2, the spacing requirements are only required between structures occupied by residential use. There is also a provision that allows the Director of DPD discretion to waive the standards in order to accommodate at least two structures on a block, provided the project responds to the issues addressed by the spacing requirements.

<u>Tower façade transparency requirements.</u> To further address the bulk issue for residential towers, the proposal includes a transparency requirement for tower facades. The required transparency is to promote the appearance of lighter towers with more intricate facades. Drawn from the Building Code, the standard would require that the total protected and/or unprotected openings account for a minimum of 75% of the total area of each exterior wall above an elevation of 125 feet. Under this condition, facades would be required to setback 15 feet from interior lot lines.

# Section 49: Downtown Retail Core Principal and Accessory Parking

## Repeal bonused short term parking as a permitted use in the DRC zone.

The language identifying bonused short-term parking as a use permitted outright in the DRC zone would be repealed. The bonus for short-term parking is proposed to be eliminated, along with the elimination of the parking requirement. Currently, the bonus for short-term parking only applies to parking provided in excess of the amount of short term parking required in a project. With no minimum requirement for short-term parking, there would be no excess amount to bonus. Also, recent public investments in short-term parking facilities that serve the retail core

have made this bonus less of a priority relative to other public benefits proposed to take its place, including the incentive for "green" building.

# Sections 52 and 64: Downtown Retail Core Upper level Development standards

#### Repeal special bulk provisions along western edge of DRC zone.

The Downtown Retail Core (DRC) Subchapter was amended in 2001 to include special bulk provisions to development on two half-blocks on the western edge of the retail core where a 30% height increase was allowed under special conditions for residential development. Under the proposal, this area would be rezoned to DMC 240/400 and would be subject to the bulk controls of that zone.

#### Conclusion

The Executive recommendation discussed in this report is the latest in a series of actions undertaken by the City to implement Downtown neighborhood plans approved by City Council in 1999. It has also evolved into an important component of the Mayor's Center City Strategy, which seeks to provide a comprehensive growth strategy for the Downtown and surrounding urban centers within the broader context of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan.

The Executive recommendation carries forward and reinforces major amendments to the Downtown bonus and TDR provisions adopted in 2001. These amendments reprioritized the development incentives in the Downtown code to emphasize affordable housing, while also addressing objectives for historic preservation, public open space, urban design, and other public benefits. An additional incentive for green buildings is also introduced. Combined, these actions will promote a dynamic, livable Downtown that will be a critical lynchpin in the region's growth management strategy.

# **Summary Chart**

The following chart summarizes the Mayor's proposed legislation for downtown zoning changes. The chart is a technical summary of the legislation outlining, section by section, the proposed Land Use Code amendments. A more detailed description of the legislation entitled "Detailed Description of the Mayor's Proposal." Additional information about the process and the basis for the recommendations is also available in the Final Environmental Impact Statement on Downtown Height and Density Changes, released in January, 2005.

Ordinance Section Land Use C		
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	(Italics indicates new numbering)	
Section 1	23.32.016, Official Land Use Map	The Official Land Use Map would be amended to depict proposed rezones and new zone designations and height limits.
Section 2	23.41,004, Applicability	This Section of the Code specifies the project thresholds for determining when design review is required in various Downtown zones. The proposed change is to treat the DMC zone the same as DOC 1 and DOC 2, which is consistent with other proposals below for consolidating all standards for these three zones into one subchapter.
Section 3.	23.41.012, Development standard departures	Currently, this Section of the Land Use Code contains the list of development standards from which departures may be granted through Design Review. The Section is already proposed to be amended as part of the Neighborhood Business District Strategy. Under the amended version, only those standards that could not be departed from would be identified, rather that the standards from which departures are allowed.
		Under the proposal, this Section would be further amended to include the quantity of open space required for major office projects, the provisions for increasing floor area above the base FAR, and the maximum parking limit as non-departable standards. Other development standards in the Mayor's proposal for which departures could be granted through design review, including standards related to the bulk of residential, commercial, and mixed use towers, would not be listed in the new Section.
Subchapter I		
Section 6	23.49.008, Structure Height	Proposed changes to the Land Use Code include:  1) Adding proposed maximum structure heights of 340 feet, 400 feet, 600 feet, and 700 feet and repealing the current maximum height limit of 300 feet that would no longer apply.
		2) Repealing provisions for structure height increases of 10% and 20% in portions of DOC 1 and DOC 2, which would no longer apply with proposed height increases.
		3) Adding a provision allowing 10% additional height for the tops of residential towers to promote distinctive architecture that adds visual interest and variety. No residential units would be permitted in the portion of the structure allowed above the height limit.
		4) Repealing provisions for a 30% height increase in the DRC zone that apply to two half blocks proposed to be rezoned to DMC 240/400.

Sections 8	23.49.025 is re-codified as	<ul> <li>5) Repealing provisions allowing a 30% height increase in the Denny Triangle through participation in the City/County Transfer of Development credit program, which will expire prior to adoption of these amendments.</li> <li>6) Adding DMC zones among the zones with a higher and lower height limit established for different uses.</li> <li>7) Adding covered or enclosed common recreation area among the features permitted to extend 15 feet above the maximum height limits</li> <li>8) Increasing the height that elevator cabs are allowed to exceed the height limits, from 20 feet to 23 feet for cabs up to 8 feet high and from 22 feet to 25 feet for taller cabs. This change adjusts the current exception to recognize technological changes in the design and operation of elevators.</li> <li>This section is re-numbered with only minor edits to</li> </ul>
and 24	23.49.025 is re-codified as 23.49.009, Street-level use requirements.	provide a more logical sequence in the presentation of development standards.
Sections 10 and 26	23.49.010, General requirements for residential use.	<ul> <li>This Section includes provisions for the common recreation area requirement for residential projects and is amended as follows: <ol> <li>Provisions allowing a reduction in the amount of common recreation area required for projects in the Denny Triangle participating in the TDC program would be repealed with the expiration of the TDC program.</li> <li>Floor area in high-rise residential structures gained through the affordable housing/high-performance green building bonus is exempt from the common recreation area requirement, and a limit is set for the total amount of common recreation area required, equal to the lot area.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Modified standards for common recreation area are proposed to encourage landscaped areas and open space at street level and to locate open space visible from the street in the base of high-rise residential structures.</li> <li>A provision is added to allow a payment to the City for open space improvements in lieu of meeting the common recreation requirement on the project site.</li> </ul>
Sections 9 and 19	23.49.010, Lighting and glare.	This Section is repealed and consolidated without change in a new Section <b>23.49.025</b> , Odor, noise, light/glare, solid waste and recyclable materials storage space standards and incorporates 23.49.019, Noise standards; 23.49.010, Lighting and glare; and 23.49.015, Solid waste and recyclable materials

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Section 11	<b>23.49.011</b> , Floor area ratio.	This section contains the consolidated rules for density limits that apply to all downtown zones. Changes in this section to implement the proposed height and density increases include:
		1) The chart establishing the base and maximum FARs for Downtown zones is proposed to be amended to reflect increases in maximum FAR from 14 to 17 FAR in DOC 1, 10 to 14 FAR in DOC 2, and 7 to 10 FAR in some DMC areas.
		2) Provisions for permitting floor area increases above the base FAR that now apply to DOC 1 and DOC 2 are proposed to be modified and extended to DMC zones with a maximum FAR of 7 and 10. This proposal would eliminate the current DMC zone provision that allows the option of using either the current bonus provisions adopted in 2001, or the prior provisions.
		3) The provision establishing how the first increment of FAR above the base FAR can be gained in DOC 1, DOC 2, and now DMC zones is proposed to be revised to replace the current bonus options with provisions for a high-performance green building incentive, which would require a project to achieve a LEED "core and shell" or "new construction" certification to gain this additional increment of FAR. The amount of the first increment of FAR to be gained above the base FAR would vary by zone, generally in proportion to the total amount of FAR between the base and maximum FAR of each zone.
		4) Provisions are established for increasing floor area above the base FAR for DMC zones with a maximum FAR of 7. In addition to the first increment of FAR above the base gained through the high-performance green building incentive, a new DMC housing TDR or the 75%-25% split in floor area bonus and TDR options, could be used to gain additional FAR up to the maximum 7 FAR limit.
		5) Features previously eligible for bonuses for the first FAR above the base FAR, including street level uses and short-term parking are proposed to be repealed.
		6) Additional exemptions/deductions from floor area calculations are proposed, including major retail stores within a specified mapped area and shower facilities provided for bicyclists. Accessory parking above grade continues to be exempt in DMC zones with a maximum FAR of 7, but would be included in FAR calculations in DMC zones where the maximum FAR would increase to 10, as is the case for DOC 1

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		and DOC 2 zones.
		7) Floor area of a designated Seattle Landmark structure located in a Downtown zone outside on a historic or special review district would be exempt from FAR calculations up to the base FAR limit, allowing landmark properties to transfer the base FAR, minus any chargeable floor area above the base FAR, as Landmark TDR.
		8) Provisions for floor area exemptions in the DMC zone that existed prior to amendments to the bonus/TDR programs adopted in 2001 are proposed to be repealed.
Section 12	23.49.012, Bonus floor	This Section contains the rules for obtaining bonus
	area for voluntary agreements for housing and childcare	floor area above the base FAR when the applicant provides or helps to fund features that mitigate a portion of the impacts of higher-density development on housing and childcare. Only minor amendments are proposed to update provisions related to childcare.
Section 13	23.49.013, Bonus floor area for amenity features	This section contains rules for how, in addition to the ways to gain floor area above the base FAR contained in 23.49.012, an applicant may achieve a portion of the floor area through bonuses for on-site amenities, such as public open space, hillclimb assist, shopping corridor or transit station access.
		Proposal highlights include:
		To reflect provisions that are included in the Director's Rule 20-93 Downtown Public Benefit Features, the zones where certain public benefit features are bonusable are specified.
		2) The bonus for transit tunnel station access has been expanded to include access to stations for all fixed rail transit facilities, including monorail and light rail stations.
		3) A provision has been added allowing the Director to approve an off-site location for bonused public open space that may not meet the standards of the public benefit features rule, but is determined to be sufficient to mitigate the open space impact of a project and is equivalent to the type of open space identified as desirable in a Downtown open space plan.
		The bonus for public restrooms has been expanded to include space provided as shower facilities for bicycle riders.
		5) Clarifying use of the option for obtaining a floor area bonus through payment for public open space in lieu of providing on-site open space. This is currently

		allowed for green street improvements, and as a potential option for other types of open space provided that certain conditions are met.
		6) The limit on the amount of FAR increase allowed through bonuses for smaller open spaces is proposed to be repealed. This limit was established when the lower maximum FARs placed more of a constraint on the total amount of FAR that could be gained through amenity bonuses and TDR options.
		7) Because the proposed maximum FAR limits increase the amount of FAR that can be gained through on-site amenities, the value of the transit station access bonus has been increased from 0.5 FAR to its earlier value of 1.0 FAR.
Section 14	<b>23.49.014</b> , Transfer of Development Rights (TDR).	This Section is proposed to be amended to include two new forms of TDR; a DMC Housing TDR and a Landmark Housing TDR. Conditions for sending and receiving sites for both these new TDRs are also established in this Section.
		Also, a provision limiting the amount of Within-block TDR allowed on a receiving site to 15% of the floor area allowed above the base FAR or 1 FAR, whichever is less, would be amended to delete the FAR restriction and to clarify that the limit applies to floor area allowed above the first increment of FAR above the base FAR.
Section 15	23.49.015, Solid waste and recyclable materials storage space.	This Section is repealed and consolidated without change in a new Section <b>23.49.025</b> , Odor, noise, light/glare, solid waste and recyclable materials storage space standards and incorporates 23.49.019, Noise standards; 23.49.010, Lighting and glare; and 23.49.015, Solid waste and recyclable materials storage space
Section 16	23.49.015 (new section), Bonus residential floor area for voluntary agreements for housing affordable to low-income households.	This new Section explains how bonus height and floor area for residential use in high-rise structures can be obtained when the applicant develops to high-performance green building standards and provides affordable housing on-site or contributes to funding affordable housing that mitigates a portion of the impact of higher-density development on housing resources.
Sections 7, 18, 27 and 34.	23.49.009 is re-codified to 23.49.016, Open Space and Open Space TDR and incorporates 23.49.027, Open space TDR site eligibility and 23.49.039, Special exception for open space TDR sites	<ol> <li>In addition to consolidating Sections 23.49.027 and 23.49.039 without changes, this new Section includes minor changes that would:</li> <li>Allow a bonus for payment in lieu for public open space acquisition and improvement, in addition to payment in lieu for green street improvements, which currently is bonusable.</li> <li>Allow the Director discretion to modify standards for minimum size and distance from the project site for bonusable open space provided off-site.</li> </ol>
Section 20	23.49.018, Standards for location and access to	This section is repealed and consolidated without changes into a new Section 23.49.019, Parking

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	parking.	quantity, access and screening/landscaping requirements for surface parking areas.
Section 21	23.49.019, Noise standards.	This Section is repealed and consolidated without change in a new Section <b>23.49.025</b> , Odor, noise, light/glare, solid waste and recyclable materials storage space standards for ease of reference.
Section 17 and 22	23.49.016 is re-codified <b>23.49.019</b> , Parking	This Section is proposed to be amended as follows:
	quantity, access and screening/landscaping requirements, and incorporates 23.49.018, Standards for location and access to parking, and 23.49.020, Screening and landscaping of surface parking areas.	<ol> <li>The minimum short- and long-term parking requirements for non-residential uses would be eliminated throughout Downtown, except the International Special Review District, while retaining the current maximum limit on long-term parking as the maximum limit for all non-residential parking.</li> <li>Conditions that the Director may consider in exercising discretion to allow increases to the maximum parking limit are expanded to address the potential need for more short-term parking to support shopping in the retail core and other areas, and to allow shared use of long-term spaces for short-term or residential use.</li> </ol>
		3) A new bicycle parking requirement based on use is proposed to replace the current requirement, which is tied to the commercial parking requirement. Additional conditions for the provision of bicycle parking are included.
Section 23	23.49.020, Screening and landscaping of surface parking areas.	This Section is repealed and consolidated without changes into a new Section 23.49.019, Parking quantity, access and screening/landscaping requirements.
Section 25	23.49.017 is re-codified 23.49.025, Odor, noise, light/glare, solid waste and recyclable materials storage space standards and incorporates 23.49.019, Noise standards; 23.49.010, Lighting and glare; and 23.49.015, Solid waste and recyclable materials storage space.	For ease of reference, this Section consolidates, without changes, several Sections with standards addressing various environmental issues.
Section 28	23.49.032, Additions to gross floor area to lots with existing structures.	This Section would be amended to address the addition of new LEED incentive for floor area increases above the Base FAR and limiting the application of the LEED standard to newly constructed structures only.
Sections 29 and 30	23.49.035, Replacement of public benefit features	This Section is proposed to be repealed and consolidated with 23.49.034, Modifications of plazas and other public features bonused under Title 24. In addition, the provisions for replacing public benefit features are clarified, now specifying that the floor area gained through any earlier bonus feature to be replaced would be subject to the current provisions

		fro adding floor area above the base FAR, regardless of what previous Code provisions the added floor area was originally granted.
Sections 31 and 33	23.49.036, Planned community developments	This Section is proposed to be amended as follows:
	(PCD)	The current process is retained for locations within the Pioneer Square Preservation District and International Special Review District.
		2) In other eligible areas, approval of a PCD is proposed to be changed from a Type IV Council decision to a Type II decision by the DPD director. The area threshold for a PCD is modified to allow, under certain conditions, the area of public rights-ofway to be included.
		3) Additional public benefits to be achieved through the PCD process are specified.
		4) DOC 1 is included as an eligible area for the PCD process, which currently is only allowed if the PCD is proposing a major public open space.
Section 32	23.49.037, Public parks in planned community developments in Downtown Office Core 1.	This Section is proposed to be repealed because it is outdated and has never been used for its intended purpose. The proposed amendments to the PCD process in Section 23.49.036 would include DOC 1 as an eligible zone, so that public open space could continue to be provided as a public benefit through the amended process.
Section 35	23.49.041, City/County Transfer of Development Credits (TDC) Program	This Section is proposed to be repealed; under the Mayor's proposal, a bonus for affordable housing and a high-performance green building incentive will replace the purchase of development credits from rural properties and contributions to an amenity fund as the means for increasing floor area and height for residential use in the Denny Triangle.
Section 36	23.49.041 (new), Combined lot development	This Section contains proposed rules for allowing density transfers on lots within the same block that may not be contiguous, as well as identifies the public benefits desired to address potential impacts that may be associated with this additional flexibility. Under the combined lot provisions, density transfers allow a structure located on one lot within a block to exceed the floor area ratio otherwise permitted on that lot, provided the chargeable floor area on all lots included in the combined lot development as a whole does not exceed the combined total permitted chargeable floor area, and also provided that the receiving lot obtains bonus floor area first from the sending lot, providing the specified public benefit features, before any base FAR is transferred from the sending lot.
Subchapter I		
Section 37	Subchapter II, Downtown Office Core 1, Downtown	This Subchapter consolidates the use provisions and development standards now found in Subchapter II,

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	Office Core 2, and Downtown Mixed Commercial	Downtown Office Core 1; Subchapter III, Downtown Office Core 2; and Subchapter V, Downtown Mixed Commercial. Combining these subchapters helps to streamline the Code by eliminating the duplication of numerous provisions.
Section 38	23.49.044, Downtown Office Core 1, Downtown Office Core 2, and Downtown Mixed Commercial prohibited uses	This section is proposed to be amended to: 1) prohibit principal use parking garages, which are now permitted as conditional uses in certain mapped locations. Map 1J is also amended to reflect the change. 2) include the existing prohibition on adult motion picture theaters and adult panorams, which would continue to only apply to the DMC zone.
Section 39	23.49.045, DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC principal and accessory parking	This Section is amended to delete principal use parking garages as conditional uses at mapped locations.
		Existing provisions allowing principal use surface parking areas as a conditional use in mapped locations within the DMC zone and the DMC conditions for accessory surface parking areas are incorporated into this Subchapter that combines provisions for DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC zones.
Section 40	23.49.046, DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC conditional uses and Council decisions.	This Section is amended to include provisions related to surface parking areas in DMC zones, and to incorporate the conditions for carpool spaces from Subchapter I that are now referenced but would be eliminated from this Section with the proposed repeal of the parking requirement.
		The reference to the Kingdome would be replaced by Safeco Field and Qwest Stadium.
Section 41	23.49.056, DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC street façade and street setback requirements.	Proposed amendments would consolidate street façade and street setback requirements from current Sections 23.49.056 (DOC 1), 23.49.076 (DOC 2), and 23.49.134 (DMC) into this one Section. Highlights of the changes include:  1) The Downtown Maps referenced in this Section
		are renumbered to correspond with changes in the sequence due to the deletion of several maps.
		2) The existing chart for façade heights in DOC 1 would be repealed and replaced with a new chart combining, without changes, the facade height requirements in DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC.
		3) Provisions for façade setback limits from Sections 23.49.076 (DOC 2) and 23.49.134 (DMC), would be incorporated without change in this Section, to consolidate all street façade standards in one place.
		4) Standards for façade transparency and limits on blank facades are proposed to be modified to reduce the area where the limits apply on steeply sloping streets, addressing issues with the current standard

		raised by recent projects.
		5) An additional screening standard is proposed to require parking located in a structure above 40 feet to be separated from the street by another use for a specified percentage of each street frontage.
		6) Setback and landscaping standards for DOC 2 and DMC zones in the Denny Triangle are proposed to be incorporated in this Section, along with the Map of the area and an appropriate reference to the Map.
Section 42	23.49.058, DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC upper level development standards.	Proposed amendments would consolidate upper level development standards from current Sections 23.49.058 (DOC 1), 23.49.078 (DOC 2), and 23.49.136 (DMC) into this one Section. This Section has been substantially changed to replace current upper level development standards for all uses in DOC 1, DOC 2, and DMC zones with two new sets of standards: 1) a simplified set of standards for all structures 160 feet in height or less, and for all non-residential structures over 160 feet, and 2) a new set of standards for structures with residential use above 160 feet in height.  Major highlights of the changes include:
		1) Repealing the current coverage limits that define "coverage limit areas" at the 125' and 240' elevations and apply standards limiting the amount a structure can extend onto these areas. These standards are considered overly complicated and limit flexibility for structures on sites that are only one lot deep. The standards were adopted before CAP substantially lowered height limits in DOC 1 and DOC 2, and the reduction in height resulted in the need to push more of the mass of a structure out to street property lines, creating conflicts with the standards and frequently required departures through design review. The standards were adopted before design review applied Downtown, and now design review can address some of the bulk issues these standards were intended to regulate. Furthermore, the proposed height increases in DOC 1 and DOC 2 zones will also help mitigate this particular bulk issue, since commercial structures would be able to distribute permitted floor area within taller, less bulky structures.
		2) Current provisions for maximum façade lengths are proposed to be repealed and, for non-residential structures, replaced with a new set of façade modulation standards, and an absolute limit on structure width above a specified elevation on large lots. For high-rise residential structures, new standards would include limits on floor sizes, combined with an absolute limit on structure width at

		various elevations. These standards vary to allow greater bulk as an incentive for projects that contribute to affordable housing.  3) Reducing the height that structures are allowed 100% lot coverage from 125 feet to 85 feet.  4) A new provision for tower spacing is proposed for highrise structures in DOC 2 and DMC zones. Above a height of 125 feet, towers would need to be separated by 80 feet in DMC zones, unless separated by a street. In Doc 2 zones, separation of 60 feet between towers occupied by residential use is required up to 300 feet in height, and 80 feet above 300 feet, unless separated by a street. A provision is also proposed to allow the Director discretion to modify spacing standards to permit at least two towers on a block if other measures are taken to
		address spacing issues.  5) A new provision requiring a specified percentage of façade transparency for high-rise residential structures is proposed.
Sections 43 - 48	Subchapter III, Downtown Office Core 2, Sections 23.49.060; 23.49.062; 23.49,064; 23.49,066; 23.49.076; and 23.49.078 Subchapter V, Downtown Mixed Commercial.	These Subchapters and the Sections within would be repealed with the consolidation of Subchapters III and V into Subchapter II.
	Subchapters IV, Downtown Retail Core; and Subchapters VI, VII, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, and XII re- codified.	These Subchapters would be renumbered according to the new sequence established with the repeal of Subchapters III and V.
Section 49	23.49.094 Downtown Retail Core, principal and accessory parking.	With the proposal to eliminate the bonus for short- term parking, the provision in this Section specifying bonused short term parking as a use permitted outright would be repealed.
Section 50	23.49.096 Downtown Retail Core, conditional uses and Council decisions	References to other Code Sections are amended to address proposed changes in the sequence of certain Sections. Reference to the Kingdome is replaced with Safeco Field and Qwest Stadium.
Sections 51 and 63	23.49.106 Downtown Retail Core, street façade requirements; 23.49.162 Downtown Mixed Residential, street façade requirements; 23.49.332 Downtown Harborfront 2, street façade requirements.	An additional screening standard is proposed to require accessory parking located in a structure above a height of 40 feet to be separated from the street by another use for a specified percentage of each street frontage.
Sections 52 and 64	23.49.108 Downtown Retail Core, upper-level development standards	Special provisions for two half blocks on the east side of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue between Pine and Union Streets would be repealed consistent with the proposal to rezone this area to DMC 240/400.

Sections 53 - 60	Sections 23.49.116; 23.49.118; 23.49.120; 23.49.122; 23.49.126; 23.49.130; 23.49.134; and 23.49.136.	These Subchapters and the Sections within would be repealed with the consolidation of Subchapters III and V into Subchapter II.
Section 62	23.49.148 Downtown Mixed Residential, conditional uses and Council decisions	References to other Code Sections are amended to correspond to the proposed re-codification of these Sections.
Section 63	23.49.162 Downtown Mixed Residential, street façade requirements.	Standards for façade transparency and limits on blank facades are proposed to be modified to reduce the area where the limits apply on steeply sloping streets, addressing issues with the current standard raised by recent projects. References to other Sections in the Code would be revised to correspond to the proposed re-codifying of these Sections.
Section 67	23.49.332 Downtown Harborfront 2, street façade requirements.	In 23.49.332, transparency and blank wall requirements are added for Class I pedestrian streets to allow for potential application to Alaskan Way.
Sections 68 - 74	23.49.338; 23.54.015; 23.54.020; 23.54.030; 23.66.122; 23.66.170; 23.74.010	Changes to references among sections for consistency.
Sections 75 - 78	23.76.004 Land use Decision framework; 23.76.006 Master Use Permits required; 23.76.036 Council decisions required; 23.76.058 Rules for Specific Decisions.	Amended to incorporate changes related to Planned Community Developments in special review districts, and special exceptions for Director decisions on tower spacing and LEED certification.
Section 79	23.84.008, 23.84.016, 23.84.018, 23.84.024. 23.84.025, 23.84.038, 23.84.042 (Definitions)	23.84 Definitions Chapter is amended to include new terms and update existing terms, primarily regarding new forms of TDR proposed and terms related to household income levels.
	Downtown Maps	<ul> <li>Downtown maps are amended and repealed as necessary for consistency with proposed Code amendments. Proposed revisions include:</li> <li>Map 1A Downtown Zones - revised to show proposed changes to zone boundaries and designations.</li> <li>Map 1B Street Classifications – no change.</li> <li>Map 1C Sidewalk Widths – no change.</li> <li>Map 1D View Corridors – no change.</li> <li>Map 1E Existing Public Benefit Features under Title 24 – no change.</li> <li>Map 1F Transit Access – deleted, recognizing all of Downtown as an area with high transit access.</li> <li>Map 1G Pedestrian Street Classifications – relettered 1F.</li> <li>Map 1H Street Level Use Required – re-lettered 1G.</li> <li>Map 1J Parking Uses Permitted – revised to reflect proposed prohibition on principal use long-</li> </ul>

23.66.122, Prohibited Uses	Review District, a reference to 23.49.020, Screening and landscaping of surface parking areas is amended to correspond with a new Section, 23.49.019.
23.66.170, Parking and access	Reference to 23.49.016 is amended to correspond to new section number, 23.49.019.
23.66.302, International Special Review District goals and objectives, G.	Reference to Kingdome is replaced with Safeco Field and Qwest Stadium.